1: Braham S-4 (no date) 1954 ED1 Rumania ED1

641 563 tional culture" from the Leninist-Stalinist point of view is a culture *national only in form* and *socialist in content* and aims at the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[10]

In fact, this principle has been legally formulated in Paragraph (j) of Article 17 of the new Rumanian Constitution according to which the state

> "ensures the development of the culture of the Rumanian people and of the culture of the national minorities, *socialist in content, national in form.*" (emphasis supplied)

641 [563] Women are given equal rights with men in all spheres of cultural, economic, or political activities. The institution of marriage and the family is protected by the state, which grants aid to mothers of large families and unmarried mothers (Article 83). Freedom of conscience and religious worship is guaranteed. The school is separated from the church; except for the training of the personnel of the religious denominations, no congregation may open or maintain [798] institutions of general study (Article 84). The constitutional provisions relating to freedom of conscience are rendered practically meaningless by virtue of Decree No. 177, Establishing General Regulations for Religious Cults, of August 3, 1948, and the Law on the Organization of the Ministry of Cults, of February 5, 1949. According to the Decree, all religious cults must be recognized by the Presidium, which must approve the statute of organization of the respective cult. The Ministry of Cults, the organ through which the Party exercises its control over religious denominations, is empowered to "supervise and control all religious cults and their institutions, and the special religious education for the training of all personnel of religious cults, the property and funds of any nature belonging to cults, as well as to confirm (or deny) the appointment of the entire permanent and temporary staff of religious cults, and to act as intermediary for relations and exchanges of information between cults in the country and abroad" (Article 1 of the Law for the Organization of the Ministry of Cults). The implementation of these provisions has resulted in the unequivocal subserviency of the cults to the regime.[11]

641 The inviolability of the home, the privacy of correspondence (Article 88) and of the citizen is guaranteed. No person may be placed under arrest without the decision of a court or "of the procurator" (Article 87). This assurance of the inviolability of the person is subject to the exclusive privilege of the Party or of its affiliated organizations to nominate candidates in the election of judges and the arresting power of the Prosecutor General, which is independent of the courts. Since there can be no writ of habeas corpus against the Procurator General—always a loyal servant of the Party—it evidently follows that extrajudicial arrest of any individual is within his discretion (see Article 8 of Law No. 6 of June 2, 1952).

Hand-in-hand with the rights enumerated above, the Constitution specifies

[10] J. Stalin, Marxism and the National Question (1942) 207.

[11] For details see "Persecution of Religion in Rumania" published by the Rumanian National Committee, Washington, D. C., 1949.

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(the ruler) and members of the "Sfatul Tarii" (country's Assembly). In general, the Romanian Orthodox Church has been since the foundation of the "United Principalities" in 1859 considered the predominant church and had a prioity over other churches. This situation continued when the Kingdom of Romania was formed after 1866 (hereafter called Old Kingdom in contrast to Romania after 1919). Nevertheless, the religious practices of other churches were tolerated and undistrubed. The Romanian Orthodox Church did not consider itself universal, was not animated by any spirit of proselytism and was rather passive and tolerant towards other creeds and rites. For this reason and because of the small number of persons professing other religions in the Kingdom of Romania, the situation did not call for any special legislation on freedom of religion prior to World War I.

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II. From World War I to the End of World War II

1. General Regime of Churches

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The necessity for special legislation regulating the status of churches other than the Romanian Orthodox has arisen after World War I.

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The Romanian Kingdom emerged after World War I with an enlarged territory. The newly incorporated provinces were hitherto governed by different laws. Bulgarian law prevailed in Banat and Maramuresh, the same law with some specific provisions was also in force on Transylvania; Austrian law was

Churches and Religion Romania

659 794 Besides their own revenues, the Churches were entitled to ask for contribution from their parishioners to cover the expenses of maintenance. In case of need the State may supply the amounts required for specified needs; in this case it reserved the right to verify that they are lawfully used.

[798] Articles 43 and 44 provided that since the Constitution guaranteed to all citizens the freedom of religion and conscience every individual has the right to belong to any religious denomination he desires, as well as to change his religion after he reaches the age of 18 years.

659 Up to the end of World War II the Law No. 54 was amended several times.

[793] The first amendment was caused by the fact that some sects carried on a propaganda which was considered to affect the public order. Thus by Decree No. 2752 of August 3, 1929 the Government introduced more severe penalties for clergymen who induced their flock to disobey the laws of the country.

798 659 Moreover, the decree allowed for the same reasons to withdraw from a religious association the authorization to function. The same fact induced the Government to make further a distinction among the religious associations which were not enumerated as historical in the Law No. 54 of 1928.

The Order (Decizune) No. 114, 119 of 1933 of the Ministr of Religious Affairs made a distinction between the permitted religious associations and those forbidden on the grounds of

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659 being dangerous to public order. The list of the latter was later expanded or reduced according to the evolution of the political concept of "public order". During World War II, for instance, several rites of the Russian Orthodox Church were forbidden because they became mere tools for the policy of Soviet propaganda.

The second amendment was made by Decree No. 3286 of October 2, 1940, promulgated by the rightist (Iron Guard) Government. By this act all religious orders and congregations not duly permitted to function at the time of enactment of the Law No. 54 of 1928 were forbidden. The primary purpose of these provisions was to outlaw the Jewish religion because the provisions of the Law No. 54 of 1928 could be interpreted as not providing for its definite status (see supra).

[793] In addition, this act restated the requirement of Rumanian citizenship for clergymen of all denominations and fixed a certain period of time within which the clergymen had either to comply with this rule or leave the country.

Finally, all religious associations were obliged to register with the Ministry of Religious Affairs which had the right to refuse the registration of any one of these bodies.

A further amendment by Decree-Law No. 711 of April 21, 1941, forbade the admittance to other denominations of people of Jewish religion.

The Law No. 927 of December 30, 1942, changed the procedure for establishment of religious associations provided for in Article 24 of the Law No. 54 of 1928. The authorization

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659 for their establishment was to be done by Order of the Cabinet. No motivation was required if the Cabinet decided to repeal a previously issued authorization.

Finally, the fight against sects (suspected of spying for the enemy) reached its climax by the Law No. 431 of July 9, 1943, which forbade the practice of religions other than the "historical denominations", specified by the Law No. 54 of 1928. The Government was empowered to suppress, by order of the Cabinet, the spreading of a specific sectarian cult and to expropriate its assets.

The further fate of all those laws and decrees is discussed infra.

128 A few words seem to be appropriate to explain the organization of material dealing with the status of individual churches. In the present part of the study devoted to the period before World War II, only the status of the Romanian Church, of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church is discussed.

The problem of the status of other religious groups acquired special significance only after World War II. Therefore, even the historical aspect of these denominations is treated in the third part of the present study dealing with the communist period (see infra III, 5).

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659 2. Organization of the Romanian Orthodox Church

After World War I the unification and reorganization of the Romanian Orthodox Church became a stringent necessity because,

III. Churches under the Communist Regime

1. Basic Provisions

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642 Although Romania has been ruled by Soviet Russia since its surrender in August 1944 and is actually governed by a Communist Cabinet appointed by Moscow in March 1945, the beginning of the Communist regime is set as of January 1, 1948, e. g., after the King's abdication and the creation of a People's Republic, since the main revolutionary social reforms have been enacted after that date.

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798 Romania signed and ratified the Peace Treaty with the Allied Nations (Official Gazette No. 199 of August 30, 1947). According to clear stipulations of the treaty Romania is bound to translate into national legislation its main provisions and apply them strictly. Article 3 of the Peace Treaty reads:

> "Romania shall, take all measures necessary to secure to all persons under Romanian jurisdiction, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, of press and publication, of religious worship..." (Italics supplied.)

The freedom of religious worship was, therefore, considered as a fundamental one and the Romanian Government was supposed to make no discrimination between the different churches of rites of various denominations existent and practiced within its boundaries.

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798 The first attempt to comply with these provisions was made through the new Romanian Constitution enacted on April 11, 1948.

642 Article 27 of this fundamental law reads as follows:

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Article 27

Freedom of conscience and freedom of religious worship shall be guaranteed by the State.

Religious creeds shall be free to organize themselves and may freely function provided their ritual and practice are not contrary to the Constitution, public security and morality.

No religious denomination, congregation or community may open or maintain institutions for general education, but may only run special schools for training personnel necessary to the cult under State control.

The Romanian Orthodox Church is autocephalous and unitary in its organization.

The way of organizing and functioning of the religious creeds will be established by law." (Italics supplied.)

Consequently, three main principles are to be retained:

a) The freedom of religious worship is guaranteed by the State;

b) The organizing and functioning of religious creeds is, with specified exceptions, free;

c) The various creeds are entitled to run special school for training their clergy.

However, these constitutional provisions do not reflect the true situation which will be brought to light only after the analysis of laws later enacted and analyzed in subsequent chapters.

2. The Regime of the Religious Denominations

A. General Survey

659 After World War II. the original law for the regulation of the religious creeds (No. 54 of 1928) suffered only one major

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assets and incomes without drawing a distinction, as the Law No. 54 of 1928 did, between the assets owned by the church and the State subsidies.

Yet, soon after these amendments had been made, the law No. 54 of 1928 was repealed in its entirety by the Decree No. 177 of August 4, 1948. This decree establishes a new regime governing the practice of religion in Romania, presumably in accordance with the principles set up in the new Constitution and interpreting them.

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The first five articles of the decree proclaim that the State guarantees the freedom of conscience and the freedom of religion and punishes the hatred engendered on account of a religious creed. The religious belief does not impede anyone from his duties and obligations under the law nor is it an obstacle to acquiring and exercising civil and political rights. Yet, no mention is made about the State assuring equal protection under law to all religous creeds.

In contrast with the Law No. 54 of 1928 no distinction is made any longer between the national, historical or minor denominations. Articles 6 to 9 of the Decree No. 177 provide, in general, that all religious creeds are free to organize and function, provided their practice and ritual are not contrary to the Constitution, the morals and (this is a new criterion) "the public security or public order".

The religious creeds are free to establish and organize endowments, associations, orders and congregations, according to their own rules, teachings, canons and traditions. However, in

order to be organized and to function, the religious denominations must be recognized and granted permission to do so by decree of the Presidium of the Great National Assembly upon proposal of the Cabinet. 659 798

"In well-founded cases, the recognition can be withdrawn in the same way" (Article 13).

Consequently, the existence of a religious denomination, including all its orders, congregations, etc., is left entirely at the discretion of the political authorities.

Only the recognized religious denominations and their local organizations possess the status of legal entities. Such status may be granted to their civil associations and endowments, pursuing religious aims, as well as their orders and congregations if they comply with all requirements provided by the Law for legal entities (Article 28).

The heads of the religious denominations as well as the dignitaries of their churches and the entire personnel must be Romanian-citizens and "enjoy fully the exercise of civil and political rights" (Article 20). No mention is made with regard to the situation or fate of those dignitaries who are not, or not as yet, citizens. 659 793

As to who has the full exercise of the civil rights is clearly defined by the Civil Law. But a different situation exists with regard to the political rights. Although those rights are well defined the statutory provisions, the final and only proof that a person enjoy the political rights is the fact that he has

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In this way, most of the material means of the Catholic 659
Church for support of its religous, educational and charitable 425
program disappeared.

These successive expropriations have been applied to [798]
all religious denominations. However, the Russian Church ("Christians of Old Rite" and the parishes included later on in the Ukrainian Vicariate) was exempted from such measures. If the Romanian Orthodox Church possesses today some material means, these were either granted subsequently by the Government or were transferred by the government from the seized assets of other religious denominations.

C. Church and School

The right to establish and run schools of all kinds 659
granted to all religious denominations by the Law No. 54 of 1928 871
and in particular to the Roman Catholic Church by the Concordat was abolished. The same is true of the right to administer religious instruction in private and public schools. This is the result of a series of decrees.

The first step toward this goal was to suppress the denominational schools and those supported in some way by churches. The Government started by suppressing all foreign schools existing in Romania by Order No. 191,653 (Official Gazette No. 176 of August 2, 1948). Many of those schools were, to a certain extent, connected with the religious denominations.

The next step was a reform of the school system

accomplished by Decrees No. 175 and 176 (Official Gazette No. 177 of August 3, 1948). By Article 35 all denominational schools were taken over by the government. It reads as follows:

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Decree No. 175 of 1948

Art. XXXV. All the denominational and private schools shall become governmental schools.

Decree No. 176 of 1948

Art. 1. For a better organization of the public education, as well as the expansion and democratization of the educational system, all personal and real properties that belonged to the churches, congregations, religious communities, non-profit organizations and trade corporations and, in general, to individuals or legal entities which were destined to serve as support...to denominational schools, are transferred to the government ownership and shall be used for educational needs.

This provision covers school buildings, dwelling for professors, boarding houses and students' homes, etc., as well as funds, estates, and legacies serving educational purposes. No compensation was to be paid for them. A list of over 2,000 denominational and private schools of all kinds, from kindergartens to colleges, which were thus expropriated, was attached to Decree No. 176. The provisions quoted make plain that no denominational school may be opened in the future which conclusion is supported by the fact that a subsequent Decree No. 177 of August 4, 1948 regulating the religious denominations does not mention the right of the church to open general schools. It deals with schools in Chapter VI but provides exclusively for divinity schools.

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These decrees affected especially the Roman Catholic Church to which belonged the majority of the denominational schools.

establishments: 177 churches; 21 chapels; 669 parishes; 2,002 prayer stations; 9 divinity schools; 6 students' homes led by nuns; 5 orphans' asylums; 1 hospital; 32 pious conventions; 26 Franciscan monasteries; 56 nuns' cloisters; 18 high schools; 5 students' homes; and 1 Ursulines Institute (these figures are derived from an article by Professor Olimp Craciun "Cultele religioase" in Encyclopedia Romanici, vol. 2, Bucharest, 1939). 659 795

The Concordat set up definite limits to the supervision by the Romanian government over the Catholic Church in Romania.

By Decree No. 151 (Official Gazette No. 164 of July 19, 1948) the Romanian Government denounced the Concordat and its additional Protocols and briefly stated that the application of all these agreements ceased on the day of the publication of the decree in the Official Gazette. Yet, Article XXIII of the Concordat provided that its denunciation by either side must be preceded by a notice served six months in advance. During this period, the agreement continued to apply but negotiations concerning a new agreement could be initiated.

Thus, the manner in which the Romanian Government chose to denounce the Concordat obviously disregarding this provision could mean only a mere rupture of agreement and relations.

The Decree No. 151 did not mention at all whether the Catholic Church was to be guided by the provisions of the law regulating religious denominations in general, or of any other law and thus left this church without a regulation by law. This refers not only to the Roman Catholic Church but also to its rites, congregations, assets, etc. In fact, the steps 659 795 798

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subsequently taken by the Government demonstrated that the Decree meant to deprive them of legal protection. The Roman Catholic Church was practically barred from any educational activities and deprived of its funds (see supra III 2, B and C). The expropriation of schools was followed by the disbanding of the Catholic organizations.

The first step was taken through the Orders of the Cabinet No. 1677 and 1679 (Official Gazette No. 299 of December 25, 1948) by which eleven main associations and endowments and all their branches were suppressed and their assets transferred to the State. The same steps were taken by the Order of the Cabinet No. 1770 (Official Gazette No. 10 of January 13, 1949) against additional eleven Roman Catholic and Reformed non-profit organizations and all their branches. [425]

Order of the Cabinet No. 161 (Official Bulletin No. 48 of February 26, 1949) suppressed also sixteen main religious and professional Catholic associations and all their district branches. Their assets were transferred to the Ministry of Interior.

Finally, the Order of the Cabinet No. 810 (Official Bulletin No. 51 of August 1, 1949) suppressed the existing Roman Catholic Orders and Congregations with all their dependent institution, regardless of the form in which they were organized. Herein were included the eleven congregations and four orders of the Catholic Church in Romania. Only two monasteries for monks and three convents for nuns were excepted where the clerical numbers of the disbanded congregations were allowed to continue their monastic life. Those who were not Romanian citizens were summoned to appear before the local police for arranging the formalities concerning their leaving the country. Those who

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refused to join the monasteries and convents, were given the choice either to request interment in public poor houses (that is, the old people) or to be trained for a handicraft and afterwards assigned to work by the Office for Distribution of Labor Forces. Each member was obliged to communicate in writing his decision to the Ministry for Religious Affairs within 20 days.

It should be also mentioned that under the Law of November 3, 1948, providing for the nationalization of private hospitals, sanatoria and similar health institutions, a number of important Catholic hospitals were taken over by the government from the Church.

5. Greek Catholic (Uniate) Churches (Romanian, Ruthenian, Armenian)

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As it was mentioned supra II, 4., there were three Uniate churches in Romania. The origin and status of the so-called Greek Catholics, i.e., Romanian Uniates, was described there. The adherents of this church inhabit Transylvania. The members of Armenian Uniate Church (Roman Catholics of Armenian rite) inhabit also in Transylvania (bishopric in Gherla). The third Uniate church, so-called Greek Ruthenian, embraces only Ukrainian (i.e., Russian) population in Bukovina and Maramuresh. Its origin is dated from the Brest Church Council of 1596 when the prelates of the Orthodox Church then within the confines of Poland accepted the union with the Holy See on conditions similar to those accepted subsequently by the Romanian Church in 1698 (see supra II, 4).

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Rumania EDI

means abject or corrupt; but the tradition of ecclesiastical elections to which it subscribed provided the Communists with a golden opportunity of which they took full advantage. 659 795

To make clear the situation in which the clergy of the Orthodox Church have found themselves, a report by an eyewitness who has escaped from Rumania may be cited. On October 30, 1950, the clergy met in conference. A huge portrait of Dimitrov adorned the assembly room. No symbol of religion was anywhere to be seen. The Minister of Culture spoke concerning the relations between Church and State. He attacked the spirit of opposition which, he contended, still flourished in some sections of the clergy. A priest, he said, had reported that obedience to Georgi Dimitrov was out of the question because he might very well command that the cross be removed from the tower of the cathedral in order to make room for the half-moon. Thereupon the assembled clergymen were called upon to give a rousing cheer for Dimitrov. Later, the question rose whether the editor of the principal Church journal should be elected or appointed. Some one objected that if election were abandoned the editor might conceivably prove to be a man wholly without faith. When the matter was put to a vote only twenty clergymen expressed a preference for appointment. Nevertheless the chairman announced that a substantial majority favored this method. One priest arose and said, "It is obvious that dictatorial methods are being employed here." No one else ventured to interpose an objection. 659 793

Having taken the Orthodox Church in tow in this manner, the Communists began to bring pressure on Catholics professing the Greek rite to secede from the Holy See and to embrace Orthodoxy. Short shrift, indeed, was made of sundry legal scruples. The heavy hand of suppression was felt almost immediately. Bishops were arrested and sent to labor camps. A 659 793 798

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Rumania EDI

659 decree of December 2, 1948, stated tersely and bluntly: "Sub-
793 sequent to the reverting of the Greek Catholic parishes to the
•798 Rumanian Orthodox Church, and in conformity with Article 13 of Decree 177/1948, its central organization . . . shall cease to exist." All properties belonging to this Church were transferred either to the State or to the Orthodox Synod. The subsequent martyrdom of the Greek clergy rivaled the witnessing of early Christian days. All the bishops were arrested for deportation, and two, Monsignor Vasile Aftenie and Monsignor Valeriu Frentiu, are known to have died in prison. Courageous members of the lower clergy are reported to have gone into hiding in order to minister secretly to the faithful. According to persons who fled the country, such priests were hunted down as ruthlessly as the clergy of southern France in the days of Danton and Robespierre.

659 Therewith the time had also come to attempt the liquidation
798 of Catholics who worshiped according to the Latin rite. Their Church was the only one which had not expressed complete satisfaction with the state of religious freedom in Rumania on June 24, 1949. The first important and ominous debate between the government and the Catholic Bishops had begun in the summer of 1948, when they stated in answer to an inquiry that it would not be possible for them to repudiate the Primacy of the Holy See. The Minister of Culture replied that he entertained no objection to an understanding with Rome on dogma, although such discussions were necessarily subject to the scrutiny of the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs, but that any other kind of dependence on the Papacy was illegal. When the Hierarchy failed to concur, the government launched against it a press campaign of the greatest vehemence, which made it very evident that the goal set was the absorption into a "National Church" of Catholics who worshiped according to the Latin rite. Such a goal has always been envisaged whenever

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Rumania EDI

Communists gained control of a satellite country; but in Rumania it could be attained with relative ease. 659 798

The first blow was struck in July, 1948, when the Concordat with the Holy See was revoked. Other decrees subordinating the Church to the State were passed soon thereafter. The Catholic Bishops manifested heroic valor and steadfastness. When their schools were expropriated, their caritative enterprises forbidden, their press closed down, and their religious orders suppressed, they protested. It did not seem meet and just to them that children should be prevented from coming to church, faithful men and women carted off to labor camps on trumped-up charges, or that loud-speakers should blare from one end of the day to the other accusatory comments which were in essence monstrous blasphemies. Our time has grown accustomed to thinking that only patriotic feeling, only the sense of solidarity with the nation to which we belong, can engender the resolution to make every sacrifice that becomes necessary. Therefore the spectacle of a few elderly men who accept every scourge of tyranny with patience because the Lord Jesus has willed that they do so has for us a quality which transcends fortitude—a quality which is the ultimate secret aura of what men for thousands of years have called freedom of conscience. This freedom, perhaps more than any other, is the counterpart of obedience—*usque ad mortem*, even to the death, as the Catholic liturgy says over and over. [648]

Here is just one quotation, from a letter addressed by the Bishops to the President of the People's Republic: 659 793

> We believe, Your Excellency, that the moment has come when we should no longer keep silence by reason of patriotic considerations, but should rather give expression to our sorrow. The measures which have been taken by the Government are extremely injurious to the welfare of the citizens of the Rumanian People's Republic. Nor should we abstain from making an emphatic protest against what has taken place

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Rumania EDI

urged the clergy to support the Stockholm Peace Resolution, 793
and endorsed the formation of a "Catholic Committee of Ac- 659
tion" to support the policies of the "People's Republic." The 795
participants were few, and one of the Vicars-general still in
office ordered the clergy of the diocese of Iasi to read a declara-
tion denouncing the congress. He was promptly arrested and
has died in prison. A second congress convened at Gherghani
five months later, after an appeal by Agotha to all "peace-
loving" priests and faithful. Months of open persecution and of [798]
strenuous pro-government campaigning followed. Under the
protection of the government, the "Rumanian National Catho-
lic Church" convened at Cluj on March 14, 1951, and took over
the administration of all Roman Catholic establishments. Some
225 clerical and lay delegates attended and set up a "Council"
of 27 members which declared its readiness to cooperate with
the government in every manner desired. Delegates who ap-
proved of this capitulation received salaries and other benefits.
Those who resisted were hounded down and imprisoned.

Meanwhile, under a decree of August 1, 1949, action was 792
taken against religious orders and communities. Five convents 659
and monasteries were designated as the places in which all
monks and nuns doing educational or welfare work should live
in accordance with rules laid down by the Minister of Culture.
Once there were as many as 1,800 nuns in Rumania. Virtually
all have returned to their families or are active as isolated
parish workers. The majority of the monks are in prison. It is 798
safe to say that by the close of 1950 the Roman Catholic Church 659
was a flock dispersed, without shepherds, harried by the secret
police and exposed to the constant threat of enslavement in
forced-labor camps. Sometimes the actions taken against the
surviving faithful have a flavor which is not only bitter but
melodramatic and grimly ludicrous. Thus a priest was sen-
tenced to a prison term for referring in a sermon to the destruc-

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Rumania EDI

798 659 tion of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus—which was deemed to be a cryptic reference to Marshal Tito. More generally every device of propaganda and repression is used to curtail the influence of religion. Popular religious festivals are forbidden, electric power failures interfere with the work of well frequented parishes, and frequenting the Sacraments makes a man subject to investigation.

659 738 733 The chronicle of the Church which worships according to the Greek rite is quite as harrowing. On October 1, 1948, the government announced that the 1,500,000 persons loyal to this Church had been summarily turned over to Orthodoxy. This action followed a campaign of vilification and suppression rare even in the annals of Communism. It is described in part in a letter signed jointly by the Greek Catholic Bishops at the time:

> During this campaign [i.e., during the week following September 26, 1948] Iuliu Hossu, Bishop of Cluj, was confined to his residence, so that he could not communicate with the Uniate clergy or in any way protest against the actions to which our Church was subjected. In Cluj all priests and layfolk who ventured to disregard the measures taken against the Bishop, and who came to call on him, were arrested. In like manner all those who witnessed his arrest were taken into custody. Moreover Bishop Suciu of Blajm was arrested by the Security Police just as he was leaving the Church at Copacel, which he had just consecrated. He was taken to an unknown destination and kept in a cave during two days, so that he could be prevented from getting in touch with the clergy and the faithful. . . .
>
> We think that prudence suggests that we do not at this time enumerate all the abuses and acts of violence of which the clergy, the priests and archpriests, have been made the victims in an endeavor to obtain their signatures. They were warned and threatened, as Bishop Suciu also was, to remain silent concerning everything that had happened.

These appeals were naturally of no avail. The government prepared to convene a "Congress" at Cluj which would ratify

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Rumania EDI

union with the Orthodox establishment. The meeting was held on October 1, 1948, and the thirty-eight canons, prelates, and priests who had been "elected" to represent the Church did as they were ordered to do. The government press reported that they had approved "unanimously and with great enthusiasm" union with the Orthodox Church and "the definitive severance of ties with Papal Rome." On December 2, 1948, still another decree transferred all the property of the Uniate Church to the Rumanian State without compensation. Much of it was subsequently turned over to the Orthodox Church. All the Bishops have been jailed or have disappeared. It is known that two, Vasile Aftenie and Valeriu Frentiu, have died in prison. The Pastoral Letter signed by the Episcopacy on June 29, 1948 (The Feast of Saints Peter and Paul), is surely one of the most touching and spiritually stirring of the documents which chronicle the persecution of the Church by the Communists. After summarizing the reasons why the Uniates had acknowledged the supremacy of the See of Peter, recalling the sufferings which had been borne by past generations for the sake of unity with Rome, and dealing with the present controversies, the Letter said:

> We must suffer for the Gospels of our Redemption in order to possess the merit of having for our part met the test, just as our fathers did as, looking upon the Rood of the Lord, they heard in their hearts these words: *Dico enim vobis: Omnis quicumque confessus fuerit me coram hominibus, et Filius hominis confitebitur illum coram angelis Dei; Qui autem negaverit me coram hominibus, negabitur coram angelis Dei.**
>
> The ties which bind us to the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, are not of human making but are of Divine origin; and it is our duty to bear

* The passage cited is from the twelfth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke and reads in translation: "And I say to you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that shall deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God."

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Rumania EDI

669 by reason of them outrage and blows and threats and imprisonment
● 798 and, it may be, destitution. These things truly mean glorifying the Lord
793 Jesus. They will prove that we desire to insure for ourselves, even in this day of passing suffering, an eternal meed of renown which will be beyond weight or measure.

[697] The men who signed this Letter all have witnessed to the faith they thus professed. And in their company stand devoid
466 of eloquence but not of holiness and fidelity, the many, many thousands, chosen from amidst the humble and the poor, who have suffered persecution and enslavement in Vhalitza or in the region between the Danube and the Black Sea. In order that we may understand their ordeal, let me quote from eye-witness accounts of the camps built to house those who toil at digging a canal in the Dobrouja:

> Approximately 30,000 prisoners are stationed there. The majority of them are intellectuals. They are digging a canal between the Danube and the Black Sea, or are building roads, bridges, and so forth. Practically all the work is done by hand in the same manner and with the same methods as those which were employed for the erection of the Egyptian pyramids. The food is very poor. As a rule, the daily menu consists of corn meal with a soup made of onions or beans. The sanitary conditions are indescribable, and for this reason the death toll is extremely high. Prisoners work more than twelve hours a day. Some of them were sentenced by the courts. Others were not. But this makes no difference, for even those who did receive sentences are not released when their terms are over.

000 The Uniate Churches are not among the great religious bodies of the world. But we might well pause in reverence while passing their temples of worship to commemorate those who in far-off countries have so nobly and sacrificially clung to their faith. Such a tribute would by no means preclude one from bearing in mind that others, too, have felt the crushing weight of Ru-